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administration, although no convincing argument is adduced for the treatment of expenditure in advance of revenue in public economy any more than in private economy. Dr. Plehn is strong in his characterizations of existing methods and practice, but narrow in many of his definitions and classifications. For example, he rejects altogether the distinction between special assessments and fees, even while admitting their striking differences. In another place he concludes that "faculty is the ideal basis of taxation" and may "best be measured by income," yet his advocacy of a multiplex tax system indicates his refusal to accept this "ideal." Again, he brashly calls to witness "the wholesale plunder of the United States treasury for pensions," which would hardly be proper in a text-book, even if true. Dr. Plehn also lets his bias against the protective tariff lead him into several questionable assertions. He has, none the less, condensed an immense amount of valuable information into small compass, and his systematic presentation affords a survey sufficiently thorough to justify it as "an introduction" to the study of public finance.

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**Powell, E. T.** *The Essentials of Self-Government.* Pp. vii, 309. Price, \$1.50. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1909.

Efficient laws to control the choice of the legislature are one of the bases of good constitutional government. The subject treated, the English electoral system is, therefore, one which must interest a large public, especially as English practice has often been pointed to as exemplary. Mr. Powell's excellent analysis and well-thought-out suggestions of reform make this book of great value to all those interested in popular government. The material is about evenly divided between exposition of present conditions and the outline of changes which should be introduced. The latter are so great in number and important that the pros and cons often cannot be discussed in detail, but the critical attitude adopted toward each subject always gives the discussion fairness, even though it is not exhaustive.

The first fifty pages discuss the problem of registration. Annual registers kept by public officials who are to be responsible for omissions should be provided. The tax collectors should aid to see that none escape registration. The author clearly puts too much confidence in the system of practically enforced registration which he outlines. Experiments used elsewhere to force the citizen out of his political indifference have been uniform failures. He also advocates a shorter registration period; just the opposite of what is now thought best by most writers in this country.

The second division treats apportionment and nomination systems. It is by all means the best part of the book. The discussion of present inequalities of representation is excellent. Numerous tables are given to show the shift of population which has made the value of a vote in some districts when compared with others stand as one to eighteen. Reapportionment should be on the basis of electoral strength, not on population, and

should take place decennially on the basis of the census. The example of Canada on this point is cited, apparently the author was not acquainted with the far greater experience of the United States. Representatives should be chosen in districts returning five to nine members, the voting should be by the proportional system—the single transferable vote preferred—and the representatives should be subject to recall, for, it is asserted, under our present system, the people must periodically abdicate their sovereignty to the legislature, an argument that recalls Rousseau.

The third and fourth parts of the book discuss the application of a number of reforms to the English electoral system. Among the more important are regulation of candidatures and election expenses, sandwichmen and bill posting, and the public payment of election expenses, salaries for members of parliament and control of the use of election agents. The additions which should be made to the present laws on corrupt and illegal practices are discussed in detail, and a final chapter gives the rules which should surround the actual casting and counting of the votes. Both on account of its vivid portrayal of the present electoral system of England and for its helpful, if far reaching, suggestions for reform, this book is welcome.

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**Schönheyder, K.** *Kapitalen som faktor i menneskets virksomhed.* Pp. 163. Christiania: H. Aschehoug & Co., 1909.

Dr. Schönheyder's is one of a series of studies published by the faculty of law at the Norwegian University. In this essay on "capital as a factor in human activity" the author devotes the first part to "capital as a productive factor" and the second to "capital as a social factor." His discussions are often unusually original, and he does not hesitate to suggest, if not fully to develop, new lines of thinking. Special chapters are given to considering the wage fund, the Austrian, the productivity and other theories of value. Schönheyder's general criticism of these theories may be stated to be that some are simply new expressions given to older economic conceptions, and that in general too little attention has been given to actual life (dynamics). The author's treatment of his subject is at times difficult to follow, a fact due no doubt in part to originality in his points of view and the limited space he has given to the elaboration of the same. He concludes his book with the now very generally accepted opinion that "the entirely free development of economic conditions involves serious dangers for society as well as capital, and it will be the task of future economists to aid society in the solution of the problem."

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**Steiner, E. A.** *The Immigrant Tide, Its Ebb and Flow.* Pp. 370. Price, \$1.50. New York: F. H. Revell Company, 1909.

A rare combination of qualities is found in the author, literary power, knowledge of many languages, disciplined mind, years of constant contact